

MINUTES OF THE NEW JERSEY STATE HISTORICAL RECORDS ADVISORY BOARD

18 NOVEMBER 2003

The meeting of the New Jersey State Historical Records Advisory Board was called to order at 2:00 p.m. at the Department of State Building in Trenton. Present were members Ronald L. Becker, Maxine N. Lurie, Marc Mappen, Barbara Mitnick, Karl J. Niederer (Coordinator), Benjamin Primer, Paul W. Schopp, and guest Joseph R. Klett, Chief of the State Archives.

Mr. Niederer read the Open Public Meetings Act compliance statement and distributed personal information sheets to the members present for updating.

The minutes of the board's 21 November 2002 meeting were approved without change.

Mr. Niederer memorialized the late Dr. Gary Hunter of Rowan University, who died 12 May 2003 in an automobile accident in Delaware. Dr. Hunter served on SHRAB from 1998 until his death. Mr. Niederer reported that he sent a letter to Gary's widow, Joan Hunter, on behalf of the Board expressing condolences as well as gratitude for his service to the people of New Jersey.

Mr. Niederer reported on the status of board appointments and reappointments. Technically, all appointments have expired as of 1 July 2003; however, SHRAB members can serve indefinitely until they are replaced. Resumes have been received from most of the active members for the purpose of submitting a request for reappointments. Richard Waldron has asked not to be reappointed; Gary Hunter's seat was vacated upon his death. The Governor may make other changes to the board's makeup. Mr. Niederer also noted that SHRAB appointments by the Governor do not require Senate consent.

Mr. Niederer reported on the status of SHRAB administrative support grants requested from NHPRC and New Jersey Historical Commission (NJHC), which are similar in substance. SHRAB has requested \$20,000 over a two-year period from NHPRC for professional services of a part-time assistant (420 hours per year). An affirmative decision from NHPRC is expected this week. A mini-grant of \$3,000 to supplement the NHPRC grant has been requested from NJHC, including \$1,700 for materials and services associated with the proposed SHRAB-sponsored conference and workshops and \$1,300 for an additional 52 hours for the part-time assistant. Dr. Mappen reported that the NJHC staff's Grants & Prizes Committee had approved an award of \$2,500 in principle; however, a Deputy Attorney General's opinion is needed concerning the eligibility of SHRAB to receive NJHC grants. Mr. Niederer commented that if NJHC cannot give SHRAB a grant, the budget cost-share for administrative support can be revised. Mr. Schopp suggested that the co-sponsor of the proposed conference and workshops might also be considered as a recipient of the needed funds.

The board then discussed the formation of a committee to plan the proposed 2004 SHRAB conference, a first-ever statewide conference on New Jersey's documentary heritage. SHRAB expects to draw 100-150 participants representing archives and historical repositories from around the state, as well as delegates from major user groups. Speakers will focus on progress made since the adoption of the 2001 Strategic Plan. SHRAB will also invite the participation of the historical community relative to updating the Strategic Plan during 2004-5 via workshops

and focus groups in Fall 2004. The update of the Plan must take into account the passage of P.L. 2003, c. 117, which established the New Jersey Public Records Preservation Program and a stable source of funding for it. The new program may change dramatically what is practicable with regard to building and improving the infrastructure of public records administration.

Also concerning P.L. 2003, c. 117, Mr. Niederer reported that the Division of Archives and Records Management would outline the process for using New Jersey Public Records Preservation Program funds next year. Current information indicates that funds will be made available to local government in fiscal year 2006. The SHRAB conference may serve as a kick-off for the implementation of this program. Mr. Becker suggested that the conference will provide opportunity for greater intercourse with local records administrators; Mr. Schopp suggested holding the conference on a weekday to make it more feasible for local government employees to participate. Ronald Becker, Ben Primer and Paul Schopp volunteered to serve on a conference planning committee. Working with Mr. Niederer, a date—probably in very late May 2004—and the scope of the meeting rooms needed will be determined sometime in the next few weeks. Rutgers University, New Brunswick campus, has been proposed as the location for the event.

Concerning the part-time SHRAB administrative assistant to be hired under the grant, Mr. Niederer proposed to form an ad-hoc committee to develop the job description and qualifications, and to search for candidates. Barbara Mitnick, Maxine Lurie and Marc Mappen volunteered to serve on the committee. It is anticipated that the assistant may do some administrative work from home. Mr. Niederer hopes that the job description can be finalized in December, followed immediately by a job posting and interviews in January 2004.

Concerning the Newark Museum grant proposal, Mr. Niederer reminded the members that completed reviews were needed at the end of this week. He also mentioned that NHPRC staff had recommended that Barbara Mitnick recuse herself from review of the application, since she had provided a letter of support for it.

Finally, Mr. Niederer mentioned the resumption of publication of *New Jersey Gazette*, the upcoming NJHC Annual Conference, and New Jersey Network's forthcoming documentary, *Teaching Over Time*.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karl J. Niederer
Coordinator